

24  
I am not satisfied as to  
the nature of this disease  
as laid down by authors -  
nor of the operation of Mercury  
so much confided in - &  
less so now than before  
I was reading  
an excellent paper of  
Mr. Maygrave in the  
Ed. Med. & Surg. Journal  
of July 1827 - who  
denies all these assumptions -

Submitted  
To

Dated March 10<sup>th</sup> 1828

The Examination of The Professors and Trustees of  
the  
University of Pennsylvania  
For

The Degree of  
Doctor of Medicine  
By

Henry M. Siler  
North Carolina

In 3 Centuries that  $\text{Z}$  has been employed  
largely in syphilis - is it probable that  
all the learned Physicians who during that  
time, could have so entirely overlooked  
what was due to the disease - or to the  
Remedy? Is there a symptom now,  
not stated by old Authors - even before  
the more general use of  $\text{Z}$ , while  $\text{S}$   
syphilis was cured by the Quercum  
+ for a Patient to affect this, rather exceeds the  
bounds of modesty -

Does  $\text{Z}$  ever, however largely given, pro-  
duce those symptoms - except when  
syphilis is contracted.

## Mucunul Disease

This appellation has been offered to that morbid effect resulting from the use of mercury in Syphilis when it produces a peculiar disordered action which supersedes or destroys the Venereal Virus, alters the symptoms of the Syphilitic disease into those of its own specific character, and produces new eruptions, nodes, ulcers &c.

This Disease is of comparatively modern origin, it was originally noticed by Benjamin Bell in his Treatise on Venereal and Lues Venerea, and since by Mr Hunter in his work on the same subject. Mr Mothras has given a more full description than any other writer on the subject.

The Venereal and Mucunul Diseases bear a strong resemblance to one another, indeed, the greater number of cases treated as constitutional Syphilis are the effects of the abuse of mercury. *Morgan says*

This disease may be either constitutional or local, it commonly slow in its progress, in some instances however it is very rapid and proves fatal in a short time.

In treating of this disease, I shall divide it into two stages (1<sup>st</sup>)

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The Mild and the Confirmed. The mild stage is characterized by a loss of the power of the medicine and the disease, and the further progress of the venereal action interrupted, the blood is being gradually thin & venous, and opening the arterial action, they however still have the outward appearances of the venereal disease, <sup>some to</sup> <sup>and</sup> <sup>not</sup> <sup>enough</sup> <sup>there</sup>. It is of the greatest consequence to the patient that this stage of the disease should not be overlooked, for it is at this period that we are able most readily to destroy the disease.

These symptoms however are not usually attributed to the ill effect action of the Mercury, but to its being <sup>prohibited</sup> in quantities too small to make any impression on the disease and it is therefore increased instead of being discontinued. Should this stage be neglected and the medicine continued, the disease will become so firmly radicated as to demand months, nay even years to cure, Should no pains be present and the mercurial movement action takes place, we will be enabled to detect the disease, by the pain in the bones & not yielding to the medicine, if it has been given in large quantities, we may rest assured the cure is medicinal. Even if we are not able to decide positively as to the extent

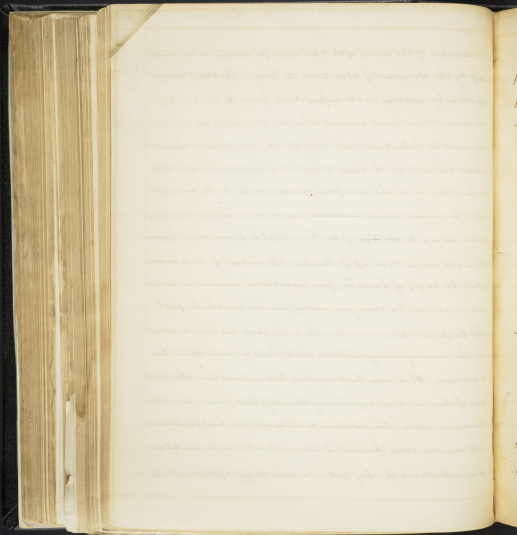
+ are there never the results of 14/10/18 the action.

or cessation of the disease, after it has existed for sometime it will develop itself, by the appearance of eruptions on the Torso, or the throat becoming affected, or by eruptions on the surface of the skin, &c. The progress of the Venereal Tumor being suspended originates, in a law of the organism elucidated by John Hunter and others, that no two different diseased actions can exist at the same time in the constitution or part of it or in other words, the more fruitful one will yield to the more powerful, for example, it is not uncommon for a Mercurial solution to be suspended during the cold stage of an Intermitting but resume in the pyrexia. Hence will suspend the progress of Gonorrhea, the eruption of Molluscs will retard the progress of Small Pox from involution, several other instances may be adduced but these give an sufficient to establish the fact. The confirmed stage arises when the mild stage has been smothered, the mercury being inhibited and perhaps increased after it has taken place. It is now the Ulcerations, Bubbles, Nodes and other symptoms of Syphilis are diverted of this of their Syphilitic and assume the Mercurial action. In addition to the symptoms last, for example, new ones arise, the result of Mercurial irritation as new ulcers around the old ones &c. they put on a more angry appearance and

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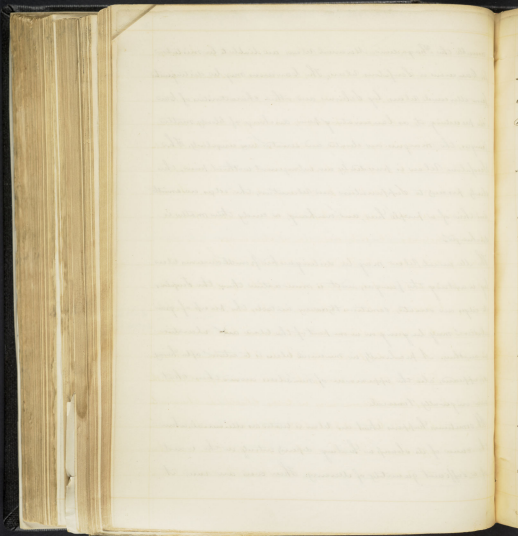


unlike the Phagedenic, Mercuial Ulcers are liable to be mistaken for Cancerous or Scrophulous Ulcers, The Cancerous may be distinguished from Mercuial Ulcers, by Scrimis and other characteristics of base, in preceding it, as lancinating pain, discharge of bloody matted fungus, the margins are elevated and serrated very irregularly, The Scrophulous Ulcer is preceded by an enlargement without pain, this slowly proceeds to Suppuration and Ulceration, the edges are smooth and thin of a purple hue, and unhealthy, a curdy thin matter is discharged.

The Mercuial Ulcer may be distinguished from the Cancerous ulcer by a acting the fungus, and it is more active than the Scrophulous its edges are serrated, sometimes the very irritable, the break of granulation may be going on in one part of the ulcer and ulceration is another. A peculiarity in mercuial Ulcers is to return after being disappeared, also the appearance of new ulcers around them that are originally venereal.

2 distinct actions

It sometimes happens that an Ulcer is treated as Mercuial, when the cause of its slough, in healing depends entirely in the want of a sufficient quantity of mercury. These cases are rare, it



more frequently depends on an exop. It is not unusual for the symptoms of mercurial Disorder to disappear entirely in summer, but as soon as winter approaches, they return.

The Causes are either predisposing or exciting. As one among the first, Idiocracy may be mentioned, weak people constitute an peculiarly propitious to the mercurial action. Intemperate habits also assist in producing this disorder. The exciting causes, as, exposure to cold mercurials, will produce the local disorder, the internal use of Mercury.

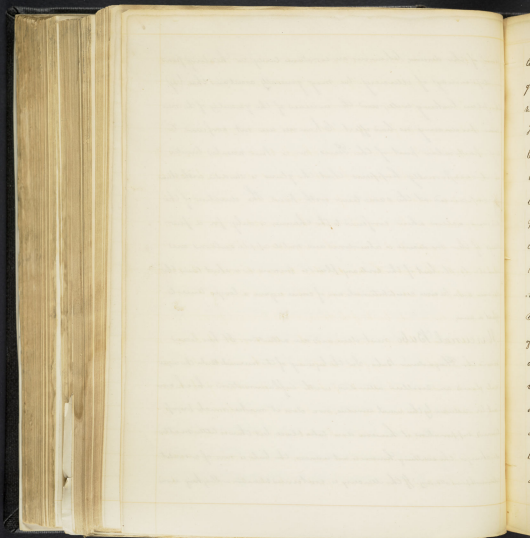
Having now given the History and Causes of this disorder, I shall proceed to treat more particularly of the symptoms, and first of Chancre. When a chancre is opening, the mercurial action, the medicine does not cease, the same course must be pursued that it did previously, should it be continued they spread and become inflamed, and if the medicine is stopped still farther they sink deep and become very intub, should the chancre be only local there will be great probability of the system at large becoming affected, and we should have presented to us, all the symptoms hereafter enumerated as attending the constitutional





from the disease, however, are sometimes tardy in healing from a deficiency of ulcers. We may generally ascertain this, by the veins looking well, and the increase of the quantity of the mucus becoming no bad effect. Ulcers are not confined to any particular part of the Penis, nor is their number limited as it occasionally happens that the glans is studded with them accompanied at the same time with pain. The duration of the diseased action when confined to the chancre, is only for a few days if the medicine is abandoned and mild applications are made to it. but if the contrary plan is pursued in a short time the disease will become constitutional, and of course require a longer time, to effect a cure.

*Mercurial Bubo* must demand our attention. It has been termed the *Phagedenic Bubo*. In the beginning of the mercurial Bubo the inguinal glands are swollen attended with inflammation which cannot be reduced by the usual remedies, nor does it make much progress towards suppuration it however does take place, but there is little matter discharged the swelling however is not intense, the bubo is now of a scabrous and painful standing. If the ulcers are continued without stopping now



taken place, the matter emitted is now ichorous and in considerable quantities, the pain is greatly increased. In some instances the ulceration is very extensive.

This Boils may arise from stimulating mercurial applications, or be the effect of the general disease, though local it sometimes extends to the system and the patient has the general disease, should this be allowed to continue, the unfortunate patient will lose strength, his appetite will be gone, he will have night sweats, prostration the bones, weak pulse, and other symptoms of Heber.

Ulcerated Throat. The tonsils, Tonsilary glands, and the Epiglottis cartilage are all liable to take on the disease mercurial action, In some instances the back of the Throat also becomes affected. Ulcers of these parts are rarely connected with a local state of the disease and now and then are very formidable so much so as to lay bare the trachea and destroy the trachea, palate bones &c. Ulcers of the tonsils are liable to metastases (viz) the one that is affected heals suddenly, and ulcerations appear on the other, this liability to metastases has been considered, "almost a pathognomic sign of the mercurial ulceration in the throat." for my own part, I think it is entitled to



very little attention, and independently of other symptoms  
would afford but dubious evidence of the existence of the disease.  
The Venereal Ulceration in the throat and the Mercurial have  
a great resemblance, so as to render it, no very easy matter to dis-  
tinguish them, one from the other, by enquiring if the Ulcer  
exists previous to the use of the Mercury, and also the quantity  
given may have some weight in influencing our decision.  
The Pericostium, Bones, and Cartilages, are also subject to  
the Mercurial Disease, when affected, heat, pain and swelling  
are present. The same resemblance in the symptoms of the Ven-  
ereal and Mercurial diseases, has before been spoken of, is also pre-  
sent, and we should be governed by the same rules that  
are laid down when speaking of Ulcerated Throat, when the  
Mercurial Disease affects the bones, the pain is more severe during  
the night when the patient is at rest, the bones of the nose are  
disordered by the use of Mercury attacking the same parts  
that the Syphilitic virus does, The Pericostium is the most com-  
mon seat of the disease, and we have pain, swelling, and  
inflammation, The Cartilages are sometimes affected and



is known by tumour, pain, &c. being present when the joint  
 is the seat of the disease, which is frequently the case when  
 the disease is constitutional, the symptoms, without allow-  
 ing to the previous history of the case, would induce us  
 to think it a case of Rheumatism,

The eruption of a humbly inflammatory kind abscession-  
 ally attends the disease.

Treatment. In speaking of the remedies adapted adap-  
 ted to this disease, I shall follow the same arrangement  
 that I did in treating of the history, symptoms &c. and first  
 of the constitutional form of the disease. When the patient  
 is plethoric, the pulse full and quick, and the uterus painful  
 we should draw off some blood, if the bowels are constipated  
 they should be opened by some mild cathartic, & having by  
 these means reduced the system sufficiently, we may now  
 resort to the Compound Decoction of Sarsaparilla, made as follows

*Rf* Simites Sarsaparilla ℥ij

Rafs Guaiacum ℥ss

Margarina ℥ij

Aqua Fontana q.s. ℥





beat down slowly to one gallon, strain and add sugar enough to make it pleasant, the dose is 6j to 6i per day as the urgency of the case requires, and at the same time exhibit Pills (which I have seen of the most decided benefit) made in the following manner

R. Saffr. Am. antim. grs 40

Gum Guaiac " 40

Sops. Hispan. L.℥

Extract. Gentian Dig. Al. S. Maff. Divid. into

Pills 40. of which the dose is 3 per day. Should the patient be in the opposite state (or) emaciated & thus will not be so much necessary for pressing evacuations. we may commence directly with the Decoctum and Pills, the diet should be nourishing and generous, I had an opportunity, not long since, of seeing a very unusual case of the disease in a negro woman of some years continuance which had been treated by repeated courses of bleeding, the case being considered to be of a syphilitic character, there were very large and visible ulcers on various parts of the body, more particularly on the inside of the inside of the thighs, a very extensive one on the back of the shoulder, besides smaller ones on

the following is a copy of the letter which was written to me by  
the Secretary of the Board of Education, dated the 10th of  
January, 1870, in answer to a letter which I had written to him  
on the 27th of December, 1869, in relation to the proposed  
amendment to the Constitution of the State, which would  
authorize the Board of Education to appoint and remove  
teachers of the common schools, and to fix their salaries.  
The letter of the Secretary is as follows:—  
"Sir, I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your  
letter of the 27th of December, 1869, in relation to the  
proposed amendment to the Constitution of the State, which  
would authorize the Board of Education to appoint and  
remove teachers of the common schools, and to fix their  
salaries. I have also the honor to acknowledge the receipt  
of your letter of the 10th of January, 1870, in relation to  
the same subject. In answer to your letter of the 27th of  
December, 1869, I have the honor to inform you that the  
Board of Education has no objection to the proposed  
amendment to the Constitution of the State, which would  
authorize the Board of Education to appoint and remove  
teachers of the common schools, and to fix their salaries.  
I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient servant,  
J. B. Thompson, Secretary of the Board of Education."

discharging) & their excrement, the solids were also liberated  
 the appetite improved, pulses small and quick, and considerable emaciation  
 she had undergone & in 5 courses of bleeding. She was treated as  
 I have indicated by the pills and decoction, and in the course of a  
 few months was cured, and has since been delivered of a fine healthy  
 child. The treatment of the disease when on uterus in present does  
 not differ from the treatment above indicated.

The local disease is usually confined to an uterus, as a preliminary  
 measure it is absolutely necessary the bleeding be discontinued, without  
 this precaution all our remedies will be unavailing & often in this in the  
 constitutional form of the disease. The disease frequently disappears with-  
 out any medicine by discontinuing its use. If the uterus is profusely irritable  
 and attended with inflammation of the surrounding parts, leeches  
 will be necessary, we may use preparations of Hemlock, it relieves  
 pain, and improves its constrictive, Astringent of lead in solution will  
 very much assist in keeping them down.

The tumour when irritable and very little inflammation attending  
 which is frequently the case when the disease is of long standing, requires  
 friction of lead and milk with a small quantity of camellian oil.



of the best applications, having allayed the irritation we may next  
 treat the parts with a weak solution of Sulphate of Zinc, or Lemon Juice.  
 In the treatment of the ulcerated Throat the mildest applications  
 will answer best, as a bread and milk poultice, if it is painful, some  
 inhalations with Steam will be beneficial. As soon as irritation is  
 reduced some mild astringent should be used, if pain is excited  
 they must be discontinued.

The Ulcerated Throat is to be treated by gargles of Sulphate  
 of Zinc &c. Dr. Mathews relates a very interesting case of  
 a woman, who had laboured under the disease in the  
 throat for a considerable length of time, she was greatly  
 reduced, and the Throat, under the treatment, by the use of the  
 decoction of Sassafras and Tonic pills with a sin in the  
 back of the neck, the Ulcers gradually healed, and the pa-  
 -tient rapidly recovered.

When the Esophagus, Stomach, or Intestines are affected the treatment  
 will be the same as that for the Constitutional disease inasmuch as  
 the two can always connected.

By pursuing the plan of treatment indicated above we will



be, ordinarily, successful, but in some instances the constitutional disease may become by repeated courses of ill-treatment so deeply rooted as to baffle all our skill, and I must then be not be disappointed, nor remain a quiet spectator of the ravages the disease is committing on our patient, but endeavor to alleviate, although we are unable to effect a cure.

